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- NO CHANGES IN AMERICAN IMPORT LAWS WERE NEEDED AND THE RECENT LAYOFFS IN THE STEEL INDUSTRY COULD NOT BE BLAMED SOLELY ON FOREIGN IMPORTS.

- A RECOMMENDATION WAS EXPECTED SOON FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL GRIFFIN BELL ON WHETHER TO GO AHEAD WITH POSSIBLE PROSECUTION OF FORMER CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTOR RICHARD HELMS FOR ALLEGED PERJURY BEFORE CONGRESS ON THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE OVERTHROW OF THE ALLENDE REGIME IN CHILE IN 1973 OR TO DEFER ACTION ON THE GROUND OF PROTECTING INTELLIGENCE SECRETS.

- CONTINUING HIS EFFORTS TO BUILD UP THE IMAGE OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE, THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS A VERY CLOSE ASSOCIATE AND "THERE ARE NO ASPECTS OF THE JOB AS PRESIDENT THAT ARE NOT SHARED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT."

CARTER'S COMMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST WERE AWAITED WITH INTEREST BY WASHINGTON'S DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF THE INTENSIVE EFFORTS NOW GOING ON HERE AND IN NEW YORK BY HIMSELF AND SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE, TO OVERCOME THE PROCEDURAL OBSTACLES HOLDING UP A NEW GENEVA CONFERENCE.

THE ISSUES, INCLUDING THOSE DEALING WITH THE FORMAT OF THE CONFERENCE, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION, AND THE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION, ARE INTRICATE AND DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN. WHEN CARTER WAS ASKED IF HE COULD "CLARIFY" THE SITUATION, HE LAUGHED AND SAID, "I DOUBT IT, BUT I WOULD BE GLAD TO TRY."

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WASHINGTON: TRY." 2

JUSTIFYING THE HEAVY AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO FINDING A MIDDLE EAST SOLUTION, CARTER STRUCK A RECENT THEME THAT HE HAS REPEATED TO VIRTUALLY EVERY MIDDLE EAST OFFICIAL HE HAS SEEN.

"PRE-EMINENT IN MY OWN MIND IS THAT WE'RE NOT AN IDLE OBSERVER OR BYSTANDER," HE SAID. "WE'RE NOT JUST AN INTERMEDIARY OR MEDIATOR. WE HAVE A VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST IN THE ULTIMATE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST."

THEN HE ADDED: "IT'S OBVIOUS TO ME THAT THERE CAN BE NO MIDDLE EASTERN PEACE SETTLEMENT WITHOUT ADEQUATE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION."